

splash!

quick facts on...

## Mobile Irrigation Labs

Conserving agricultural and urban water

MAY 2008

### The South Florida Water Management District

is a regional, governmental agency that oversees the water resources in the southern half of the state. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts.

Our Mission is to manage and protect water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems, and water supply.

*"Since I am very concerned about water overuse and have committed to Xeriscaping, I am happy to have input and guidelines from an objective, non-commercial source."*

**Naples resident**

Mobile Irrigation Labs (MILs) are a tried-and-true tool in the water conservation toolbox. They offer a free public service to the agricultural industry, homeowners and other users of water for irrigation. These specialized labs on wheels evaluate the effectiveness of irrigation systems and then make recommendations on how the system can be made more efficient. The result is a savings in water, energy, time, and money for the user. MILs are also a great example of the benefits of partnerships. The South Florida Water Management District, in partnership with the Florida Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services, National Resources Conservation Service and the Soil and Water Conservation Districts, share not only funding but technical expertise, and in offering public education designed to create an awareness of the benefits of water conservation.

### Background

Water conservation has become a top priority issue for planning and managing future water needs... not just in South Florida but statewide and globally as well. In many areas of southern Florida, particularly along our coasts, the tremendous population growth is causing an increased demand on our water supply. Mobile Irrigation Labs (MILs) play an important role in meeting future water demand.

### What MILs Do

MILs offer a free public service to evaluate agricultural and urban irrigation systems.

MILs evaluations include:

- Water shortage
- Variances
- Nursery permitting
- Water SIP
- General public

When requested, MIL staff evaluate the efficiency and uniformity of an irrigation system and then prepare a report for the property owner and/or staff with recommendations on how the system could be made more efficient by improving its operation and management.

### Benefits of MILs

Improved irrigation efficiency in agricultural and urban systems results in:

- Lower water use
- Lower water costs
- Lower energy costs
- Increased crop production
- Reduced runoff of fertilizer and pesticides
- Reduced soil erosion
- Reduced plant diseases

### Outreach

Mobile irrigation Lab technicians share their knowledge of wise water use with property owners and/or staff during evaluations. The educational benefit is multiplied, since many people share their knowledge with their neighbors, families and friends.



An MIL staffer measuring volume as part of a catch can test

**Florida's Water**  
It's Worth Saving

## How Do MILs Work?

Participation in the MIL program is voluntary and free of charge. Individuals or large volume users can request that an MIL team complete an on-site inspection of their automatic sprinkler system. The MIL is staffed by trained irrigation technicians who evaluate and provide recommendations based on their findings.

## What Do MILs Evaluate?

Depending on the type of evaluation – urban or agricultural – MIL staff conduct a series of tests measuring pumping capacities, sprinkler pressures and flow rates, and how evenly water is distributed by the irrigation system. Uniformity is important to efficient landscape and crop watering. Uneven application can result in some plants receiving too much water and others not enough – an important consideration for commercial growers who use their irrigation system for application of fertilizer and fungicides.

## How Much Water Can Be Saved?

Last year, the twelve MILs in South Florida saved over 483 million gallons.



Conducting an urban evaluation for a media event

*"131,854 gallons per year I waste. That is very incredible to me. I was shocked when I saw that number."*

**Port St. Lucie resident**

## Where Can MILs Be Found?

Presently twelve mobile irrigation labs are in operation in sixteen counties within the South Florida Water Management District. The list below shows locations, type of lab, and contact information:

Mobile Irrigation Lab Name	Type of Evaluation*	Contact Name	Phone Number
Big Cypress Basin MIL (Collier)	Urban	Bill Gaddis	239-455-4100
Broward MIL	Urban	Richard Naedele	954-873-7594 or 954-584-1306
Broward/Palm Beach MIL	Agricultural	David DeMaio	561-683-2285 x113
East Coast Florida RC&D (Orange)	Urban	Dolly Munoz	407-658-7777
Lee MIL	Urban	James (Nik) Nikolich	239-995-5678 x3
Lower West Coast MIL (Collier, Hendry, Lee, Glades, Charlotte)	Agricultural and Urban	Mark Siverling or Kim Bucceri	239-455-4100
Martin MIL	Urban	Charles Lambert	772-221-1303
Miami-Dade MIL Labs 1 & 2	Agricultural and Urban	Robert Perez or Sonny Clayton	305-242-1288
North Miami Beach MIL	Urban	Robert Perez	305-242-1288
Palm Beach MIL	Urban	David DeMaio	561-683-2285 x113
St. Lucie MIL	Urban	Garry Bailey	772-461-4546 x111
Treasure Coast MIL (St. Lucie, Martin, Okeechobee)	Agricultural	Leona Yates	772-461-4546 x113
*Urban includes Residential & Commercial Agricultural includes Nursery & Farms			

*"We run through the irrigation system with the homeowner. We check their clock, we take pressure readings. It will let them know how much water they're actually applying to their lawn and if they can save any water."*

**Garry Bailey, St. Lucie MIL technician**



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**South Florida Water Management District**  
**3301 Gun Club Road**  
**West Palm Beach, Florida 33406**  
**561-686-8800 • 800-432-2045**  
**www.sfwmd.gov**

**MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. Box 24680**  
**West Palm Beach, FL 33416-4680**

## SERVICE CENTERS

Big Cypress Basin/Naples  
 239-263-7615  
 Broward  
 954-713-3200  
 Florida Keys (Plantation Key)  
 305-853-3219 or 800-464-5067  
 Lower West Coast  
 239-338-2929 or 800-248-1201

Martin/St. Lucie  
 772-223-2600 or 800-250-4100  
 Miami-Dade  
 305-377-7274 or 800-250-4300  
 Okeechobee  
 863-462-5260 or 800-250-4200  
 Orlando  
 407-858-6100 or 800-250-4250  
 Palm Beach County  
 561-682-6000 or 800-432-2045